

## **Early Intervention Services**

Special education services are available to children from birth until age 22. Services available to children from birth to 3 years of age are called *early intervention services*.

### **What are early intervention services?**

They are services for infants and toddlers who have one or more disabilities. They are free services delivered by a trained professional.

### **What kinds of services are available?**

Services include (but are not limited to) provision and necessary modification of devices that improve the child's ability to function, services to prevent hearing loss and hearing rehabilitation, family counseling and home visits, health services, nursing services, nutrition services, occupational and physical therapy, social work services, speech and language therapy and special instruction services.

### **What infants and toddlers qualify for these services?**

Infants and toddlers may qualify for early intervention if they:

- experience a cognitive, physical (or motor), communication, socio-emotional and/or adaptive delay in their development that can be measured;
- have been diagnosed with a physical or mental condition such as autism, cerebral palsy, or Down's syndrome that is likely to delay the child's development; or
- are at risk for developing a delay caused by one or more specific conditions which include pre-maturity, assisted ventilation for 48 hours or more in first 28 days, small birth size, and/or pre-birth substance exposure or post-birth drug withdrawal.

### **How do I get early intervention services for my child?**

Both local school districts and regional centers receive these referrals. To ask for one, send a written request to one of these local agencies. Date your request and keep a copy.

### **After the referral is made, what happens?**

The evaluation must be done in 45 days. At that time, a meeting is held to develop an *individualized family service plan* (IFSP). The evaluation includes assessment of child and family and is based on review of records, observations, test procedures and a family interview. The family part of the assessment is voluntary.

### **What is an IFSP?**

It is a written plan that is reviewed every 6 months. It describes the services the child will receive and it is developed jointly by the family and trained professionals.